

## REGULATING THE HEIGHT OF BUILDINGS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

---

JANUARY 15, 1925.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed

---

Mr. ZIHLMAN, from the Committee on the District of Columbia,  
submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 11214]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 11214) to amend an act regulating the height of buildings in the District of Columbia, approved June 1, 1910, as amended by the act of December 30, 1910, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with the recommendation that the bill do pass.

The 90 feet limitation provided in this bill is the present height permitted in the business zones, and the change proposed was heard and approved by the zoning commission at a meeting held on December 18, 1924. The American Institute of Architects suggested the amendment in order to secure better architectural treatment and better ceiling heights for residential buildings.

The limitation as to eight stories in height is retained in this bill. At a public hearing there were no protests against the change.

There is submitted herewith a letter from the District Commissioners regarding this bill:

DECEMBER 31, 1924.

HON. STUART F. REED,  
*Chairman Committee on the District of Columbia,  
House of Representatives.*

SIR: The Commissioners of the District of Columbia have the honor to transmit herewith a draft of a bill entitled

"A bill to amend an act regulating the height of buildings in the District of Columbia, approved June 1, 1910, as amended by the act of December 30, 1910."

Under the authority of an act of Congress, approved March 1, 1920, entitled "An act to regulate the height, area, and use of buildings in the District of Columbia and to create a zoning commission, and for other purposes," the original zoning commission on August 30, 1920, established an 85-foot height district. On November 22, 1923, the present zoning commission changed the 85-foot height district to the 90-foot district, with a limitation of eight stories. This

## 2 REGULATING HEIGHT OF BUILDINGS IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

change was made after a duly advertised public hearing for the purpose of improving ceiling heights without permitting an increase in the number of stories or floor space, and for the purpose of encouraging better architectural treatment of buildings.

Under section 2 of the act of March 1, 1920, it is provided that the permissible height of buildings in any district shall not exceed the maximum height of a building authorized upon any street in any part of that district by the act of Congress, approved June 1, 1910, entitled "An act to regulate the height of buildings in the District of Columbia." Under the last mentioned act the limitation of 85 feet on a residence street authorized the application of the new 90-foot height district to business property only.

On December 18, 1924, the zoning commission held a public hearing for the purpose of learning the sentiment of all interested parties with respect to an amendment to the act of June 1, 1910, with a view to permitting residential improvements on residential streets to be erected to a height of 90 feet in the 90-foot height district. The American Institute of Architects suggested the amendment in order to secure better architectural treatment and better ceiling heights for residential buildings. The architects also contended that the benefits of the 5 feet additional height were as desirous for residential buildings as for business buildings, and as the limitation of eight stories is imposed, there would be no gain to the property owners in floor space, but simply a betterment in the beauty and attractiveness of the building and in living conditions. There were no protests at the public hearing.

In view of the fact that the act of June 1, 1910, further limits the height of buildings on residential streets to the width of the street diminished by 10 feet, the proposed amendment would affect only the streets that are 100 feet or more in width and would not, therefore, disturb the basic principle involved in preserving the light and air privileges of all property.

The zoning commission unanimously approves the proposed amendment as being in the public interest.

Very respectfully,

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,  
By CUNO H. RUDOLPH, *President*.

○